

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**2012 Livestock Operations****12-VCT-001****VALLES CALDERA NATIONAL PRESERVE****SUBMISSION DUE DATE: DECEMBER 15, 2011****INTRODUCTION**

The Valles Caldera Trust (Trust) is seeking proposals to operate an ecologically and economically viable livestock operation on the Valles Caldera National Preserve (Preserve) for the summer grazing season of 2012, with a possible extension through 2015. All livestock operators are eligible, including permittees on USFS and BLM lands, private land livestock operators, and ranchers on state trust and tribal lands. For the purposes of this program, an eligible participant is identified as:

- 1) A single producer or operator,
- 2) A partnership or company,
- 3) A corporation or association,
- 4) A non-profit organization, or
- 5) A university or educational institute/organization

The 2012 grazing season will run for 120 days beginning on or about May 30, 2012 with removal occurring on or about September 30, 2012.

- **Minimum guaranteed** capacity is set at **500 AU's (Animal Units¹)** for 120 days based on average capacity. Current long-term forecasts are predicting the probability of warmer and drier conditions.
- The **maximum capacity** could be set at **2,282 AUs**. This number would require favorable, record conditions in the form of spring precipitation and adequate soil moisture.
- Final capacity will be determined based on actual conditions and will be adjusted accordingly.

Average precipitation and associated soil moisture at the Preserve will provide capacity for about 540 AUs. Prevailing climate and range readiness may require delays in entry (no later than June 15, 2012). Stock numbers may be adjusted if precipitation changes over the next 30 - 45 days or conditions during the range readiness assessment warrant. The Trust will not consider proposals which include fewer than 500 AUs of cattle. The Trust reserves the right to make the decision whether or not to adjust the capacity throughout the grazing season.

¹ **1.0 AUs** is equivalent to one mature, lactating cow with a calf at her side. Yearlings, steer and heifer have a value of **0.7 AUs**. A mature bull has a value of **1.0 AUs**.

Capacity for livestock considers the total amount of forage produced on areas of the Preserve suitable for grazing. Suitability is based on topography, distance to water and forage availability. The average capacity for livestock has been determined from measured field forage quantities across the Preserve on suitable land during 2002-2011, a period that included both exceptionally dry and wet years (low and high forage production). Of the total forage available on suitable land, 60 percent is allocated back to the ecosystem and approximately 20 percent is allocated to provide for wildlife including the Preserve's resident elk herd (estimated at 2,500 head by the NM Department of Game and Fish). The remaining forage is available for extractive uses including grazing by domestic livestock. Actual field measurements during 2002-2011 indicate an average annual livestock capacity of 541 Animal Units for 120 days; years with above-average precipitation have produced forage for an estimated 1,412 Animal Units; and the record high production year was capable of supporting an estimated 2,282 Animal Units. Years with below-average precipitation have led to the reduction or cancelation of livestock grazing.

The winter-spring precipitation of 2010-2011 was 45% below average, leading to extremely dry conditions into May, and then followed by near-zero precipitation (0.15") in June. Fortunately, the monsoons that began in late July were near-average in the monthly total (4.26"), followed by the second-greatest rainfall amount in August (6.24") that's been recorded on the Preserve since 2003. As of mid-September, the VCNP has received an additional 1.88" in September. Thus, for the year, the Preserve has experienced the driest 'water-year' (October-to-September) on record, but the monsoon has been above average and has greatly ameliorated the drought effects of the first half of the year.

Table 1 presents the number of cow-calf pairs and their yearling equivalents based on an entry date of May 30, 2012 (4 months of grazing).

Table 1 - Animal Unit equivalents at varying capacities for cow/calf pairs and steers.

Number Cow /Calf Pairs	Number Yearlings
250	357
300	428
400	571
500	714
750	1071
1,000	1429
1500	2143
2000	2857
2282	3260

BACKGROUND

The Preserve was established through the Valles Caldera Preservation Act (Act), Public Law 106-248 to “protect and preserve the scientific, scenic, geologic, watershed, fish, wildlife, historic, cultural, and recreational values of the Preserve, and to provide for multiple use and sustained yield of renewable resources within the Preserve.” The Act states that the Preserve will be operated as a working ranch consistent with other purposes.

The Act also created the Trust as a wholly-owned government corporation to manage the Preserve. A nine-member Board of Trustees governs the Trust and the Executive Director oversees management of the Trust and the Preserve.

Since federal acquisition, the Trust has operated a variety of livestock programs including replacement heifer, yearlings, bull research, cow-calf and conservation stewardship programs. Under these programs the Trust has run up to 1,960 head, based on the annual production and elk population estimates.

LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The Preserve is approximately 89,000 acres of high elevation forest and grasslands and is located in the Jemez Mountains (primarily in Sandoval County) of north central New Mexico. The main entrance to the Preserve is located 75 miles northwest of Albuquerque, 21 miles north of Jemez Springs and 18 miles west of Los Alamos (see attached Location Map). The Santa Fe National Forest, Bandelier National Monument and Santa Clara Pueblo surround the Preserve. Prior to federal acquisition in 2000, the property was known as the Baca Location No. 1. Commercial use of the resources, including ranching, timber harvest, and hunting, occurred on the Preserve under various owners since the 19th century. For additional information, visit our web site at www.vallescaldera.gov.

The livestock program operates in and around a series of valles, or high elevation montane pastures totaling about 27,000 acres divided into 18 pastures and traps (see attached pasture and image maps). When conditions are favorable, these grasslands produce abundant forage, which attracts about 2,500-3000 elk to the Preserve. Key information relative to livestock operations on the Preserve include:

- The valles and pastures are accessible by pick-up truck and trailer; four-wheeled drive is sometimes necessary.
- Two sets of pens with certified scales are available for shipping and receiving.
- A chute is available for doctoring.
- Water is available through a series of functional earthen tanks and live streams.
- Fences consist of more than 50 miles of boundary fence and 60 miles of interior fence, which are typically 4-5 strand barbed wire. Some older “sheep fence” still remains in many areas.

- A pack animal or ATV is useful for hauling equipment or supplements.
- Pens, tack sheds, a barn and traps are available for horses.
- The primary safety concern on the Preserve is frequent afternoon lightning storms during July and August.
- Other hazards include high elevation, uneven terrain, prairie dog holes, bogs, mud and other hazards typical of natural environments.
- Healthy immunized herds generally fair well although brisket and hoof rot occur due to elevation and climate.
- Mountain meadows are dominated by sedges and rushes, as well as Kentucky bluegrass and Timothy; valley slopes are dominated by Arizona fescue, pine dropseed and Parry's oatgrass; and grazable woodlands are dominated by Kentucky bluegrass, Parry's oatgrass, Thurber's fescue and Arizona fescue.

SCOPE OF CONTRACT

A description of services and related work will be included in the terms, specifications and provisions of the contract.

The selected participants will be expected to provide livestock as well as all supplies, equipment, and labor for successful operations. This will include transportation of cattle to and from the Preserve and management and care of the cattle while on the Preserve. Management and care should provide for the stewardship of the land and the animals and with respect to fishing and other recreation activities occurring on the Preserve. It is expected that management of the cattle will be accomplished primarily on horseback, but may include the use of trained stock dogs. Most pastures are accessible by pick-up truck with horse trailer. Use of ATVs is limited to those activities where motorized vehicles are the only practical tool for accomplishing required work, such as placement of supplements, temporary fencing, and transportation of supplies and equipment.

The respondent may include value added options, including working with local producers, conservation programs, research or monitoring projects, and educational seminars associated with ranching or range management, etc. Proposed value added activities will be evaluated for compliance with Trust goals and with existing laws, including the National Environmental Policy Act and the National Historic Preservation Act (other state and federal laws may apply). Value added activities associated with cattle operations must provide for public safety, will not require or cause significant ground disturbance, do not have the potential to affect water quality and can be conducted under current management policies. Added value activities require a full insurance policy and proof of experience.

NOTES ON PROPOSALS

The Statement of Work/Technical Specifications below are guidelines and not all-inclusive. This is a “best value” procurement and it is our intention to enter into final negotiations with the top bidder(s).

STATEMENT OF WORK/TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

1. Deliverables will include:

- A. Delivery of livestock within 5% of animal units identified in the submitted proposal (unless conditions allow for or require an adjustment).
- B. Performance of management activities as described in the submitted proposal.
- C. Range rider logs documenting herd management as described in the submitted proposal.
- D. Performance of value added activities as described in the submitted proposal.
- E. Documentation of animal health for all cattle, horses, and dogs being brought onto the Preserve.
 - Veterinary or laboratory certification is required for Trichonomiasis testing or coggins testing.

2. Performance Requirements

A. Safety

The successful proponent will develop a safety plan that identifies the potential hazards and accident prevention measures associated with all proposed activities prior to entry. The Trust is available to assist the proponent with this requirement upon request.

Also prior to entry the participant must provide proof of insurance and emergency contact information.

B. Payments

Terms and timing of payment should be included in the proposal.

C. Weed Prevention

- Vehicles (except those identified for commuting), trailers and horses will remain on the Preserve during the grazing season. Equipment should be thoroughly washed of mud and weeds before entering Preserve.

D. Livestock Health

- All livestock should have health exams before entering the Preserve and shall be free of contagious diseases. The successful applicant will submit a health plan for vaccinations and worming to the Trust for approval. Proof of treatment of animals

such as producer's signed logs, or receipts from purchase of vaccinations and dewormers will be required.

- Steers will be vaccinated with Cattle Master 4 or equivalent, Ultrabac 8 or equivalent and Ivomec Pour-on or equivalent prior to entry.
- Cows will be vaccinated with Cattle Master 10 or equivalent, Ultrabac 8 or equivalent and Ivomec Pour-on or equivalent prior to entry.
- Bulls must be tested for trichomoniasis and brucellosis and negative results provided in writing. Bulls will be vaccinated with Cattle Master-4 or equivalent, Ultrabac 8 or equivalent and Ivomec Pour-on or equivalent prior to entry.
- Horses will have a current Coggins test and inspection papers issued by the New Mexico Livestock Board or out-of-state equivalent.
- The successful applicant will provide proof of current vaccinations for rabies, parvo, and distemper for each working stock dog brought onto the Preserve. Dogs shall be free of fleas and ticks. *Note to bidders: Coyotes on the Preserve have tested positive for distemper, parvo, and plague. In addition, the Trust hosts recreational activities that include overnight or dark night experiences that emphasize the Preserve's natural soundscape. Dogs must be controlled at all times.*

E. Research, Inventory and Monitoring

- The Trust conducts a variety of activities to improve its management and understanding of the Preserve's resources. The Trust may request participation in monitoring activities. In the past, these types of activities have included putting GPS collars on cattle and tracking their movements and measuring animal's responses to different supplements. Your participation in any activity that could directly affect your stock would be voluntary and greatly appreciated.

3. Additional Requirements:

- A. Riparian areas are fragile habitats and require close monitoring and range riders. Proposals must include specific plans for protection of these areas including:
 - a. Daily inspection and removal of cattle from riparian areas.
 - b. Timely inspection of fences.
- B. Location of supplements must be approved in advance of placement.
- C. Off road driving is not allowed on the Preserve except for ATVs.
- D. ATV use is limited to transport of salt, mineral and equipment.
- E. Ability to rope and doctor in pasture is recommended.
- F. Control of coyotes or other predators is specifically forbidden.
- G. Access to the Preserve is limited. Working and living on the Preserve requires compliance with all rules governing behavior of everyone on the Preserve.

LABOR, EQUIPMENT, SUPPLIES AND OTHER MATERIALS TO BE PROVIDED BY THE TRUST

1. Quarters – three-bedroom house, equipped with basic furnishings and three bunk-beds (sleeping for six) is available and can be rented for \$300.00/month.
2. Two sets of shipping pens with working chutes and certified scales are available for use by the proponent for no fee.
3. A tack shed that can be locked is available for use by the proponent for no fee.
4. Up to four (4) pastures and corrals are available for horses at no fee. Up to four (4) horses per rider, not to exceed 16 total horses, are allowed on the Preserve; no stallions are allowed.
5. Program oversight will be provided by the Trust.
6. A grazing plan that includes quality assurance will be developed by the successful applicant in cooperation with the Trust and will be followed by the successful applicant. Changes to the grazing plan will be negotiated with the successful applicant during the grazing season.
7. The final contract will include a provision for removal in case of drought or in the event of a large fire event.
8. The Trust will maintain existing perimeter (boundary) fencing; program-specific interior fencing will be the responsibility of the proponent.
9. Monitoring will be the responsibility of the Trust and may result in alterations to the grazing plan or removal of animals from certain areas of the Preserve.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATIONS

1. This request does not commit the Trust to pay any costs incurred by the applicant in the submission of this proposal. The Trust will treat each proposal as proprietary information. Proposals will not be returned. The winning proponent, the total compensation, and a summary of the proposal will be made public.
2. The Trust reserves the right to reject any or all proposals.
3. The Trust will review all received proposals and select the finalists, which then may be asked to participate in an oral interview with the Trust selection committee (this may be by telephone). Reviewers may be Trust staff, members of the Board, and one or more representative from a federal land management agency (USFS or BLM).
4. The Trust reserves the right to conduct discussions with any applicant if it is deemed necessary for understanding, clarity or negotiations.
5. The Trust may elect to negotiate with and award the grazing opportunity to two or more applicants if the proposals appear compatible and proponents are willing.
6. Site visits will be provided following award of the contract.
7. The Trust may elect to extend this grazing contract through 2015.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The Trust will award a contract resulting from this solicitation to the responsible offeror whose offer conforming to the solicitation will be most advantageous to the Trust, economic return, and other technical factors considered. The following factors shall be used to evaluate offers: 1. Technical Capability of the proposal to meet the Trust requirement, 2. Best Value to the Trust and 3. Past Performance.

Response to the Evaluation Criteria

The applicant may submit their response in any format, addressing four evaluation criteria: 1) Livestock Management Plan; 2) Resource Protection Strategy; 3) Best Value to the Trust; and 4) Past Performance. Addressing the bulleted items will strengthen your proposal.

- 1) Livestock Management Plan – The actual pasture rotation will be developed by the successful applicant and the Trust prior to entry. Elements to include in your livestock management plan:
 - ✓ The number and class of animals you propose to graze on the Preserve and the number of herds you plan to manage.
 - ✓ How you are able to adjust to possible changes in capacity based on actual conditions in the spring as described in the introduction.
 - ✓ Describe the proposed methods for transporting livestock to and from the Preserve, including items such as time frames, number and size of vehicles, and safety procedures
 - ✓ Describe the workforce and resources you will use to manage the livestock program including the number of range riders, horses, and vehicles. Describe how you expect to manage the herd on a day-to-day basis.
 - ✓ Describe any planned use of temporary fences or supplements to aid in resource protection.
 - ✓ Include plans to ensure the safety of your workforce and the well-being of your livestock.
 - ✓ Describe how dogs will be used and controlled if applicable.
 - ✓ Describe your herd health program, including disease prevention and the planned management of the animals' health while on the Preserve.
 - ✓ Are you planning on conducting any research or monitoring? (not required)
 - ✓ Describe the personnel that will be living and working on site and personnel that will be commuting and their roles and relationships. (For example: Range riders A, B,

and C will be living and working full time on the Preserve. Owner D, will be on site two days per week. Range riders E & F will be available if needed.)

- ✓ Describe any innovative management ideas.

2) Resource Protection Strategy –

- ✓ Describe how you will ensure that animals remain in designated grazing areas, and how you will ensure that cattle are rotated to avoid overgrazing in any one location. This section should be supported by the overall livestock management plan.
- ✓ Describe actions you would take to avoid transporting weeds onto the Preserve.

3) Best Value to the Trust –

- ✓ Describe the monetary or other value added returns that will accrue to the Trust:
 - i. Proposed payment should be described in terms of guaranteed (e.g., price per head, per pound, or flat grazing fee), potential or variable returns (e.g., bonus to be paid on better than average weight gain for steers),
 - ii. Include value added options such as working with local producers, educational programs, conservation programs, or other work provided such as the repair of fences, earthen tanks, or riparian restoration activities.

4) Past Performance (Experience of the Proposed Organization and Key Personnel) –

- ✓ Provide names for individuals who will be overseeing or implementing the proposal.
- ✓ Describe their experience including number of years, size, and location of operations they have previously worked on.
- ✓ Describe the experience of the proposing organization with similar livestock operations on similar landscapes, particularly high-altitude and ecologically sensitive landscapes.
- ✓ Describe any specialized skills (roping, riding, doctoring etc.)
- ✓ Include any relative education and experience that indicates knowledge as well as personal qualifications such as reliability, leadership etc.

- ✓ **Required References**

- i. For the proposing organization, a minimum of three (3) personal or professional references, including name, address, telephone number, and email address, if applicable, and one (1) bank reference, including name and contact information. For each range rider, a minimum of two (2) personal or professional references, including name, address, telephone number, and email address, if applicable.

HOW TO APPLY:

Written responses to the RFP are required. The RFP closes on December 15, 2011. Please respond to the RFP by providing a detailed summary of the livestock operation you are proposing for the 2012 season. Include a response to the four evaluation criteria addressing as many of the bulleted items as possible will strengthen your proposal.

COMPLIANCE

It is the responsibility of the selected bidder to comply with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations.

PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. An Electronic Submittal or hard copy must be received no later than **4:00 PM, MST on December 15 , 2011.**
2. Electronic Submittals should be less than 5 MB and submitted to thaarmann@vallescaldera.gov
3. Proposals submitted via U.S. Postal Service should be addressed as follows:

**Dr. Timothy Haarmann
ATTN: 2012 Livestock Program
Valles Caldera National Preserve
P.O. Box 359
Jemez Springs, NM 87025**

4. Proposals that are hand-delivered or submitted via Federal Express or any other parcel service should be delivered to the physical address as follows:

**Dr. Timothy Haarmann
ATTN: 2012 Livestock Program
Valles Caldera National Preserve
18161 Highway 4
Jemez Springs, NM 87025**

For any questions, please contact Timothy Haarmann, thaarmann@vallescaldera.gov 505-428-7717 or 505-661-3333.

Attachments:

- # 1. Cover/Signature Page for Proposal
- # 2. Location Map
- # 3. Potential Pasture Map

Proposal Cover/Signature Page

Valles Caldera National Preserve

Response to FY12-RFP-00X

Name			
Business/Agency/Affiliation			
Email Address			
Mailing Address			
City/State/Zip			
Primary Phone:		Alternate Phone:	

Signature

Date

Scan signed copy and include with electronic submittal or mail to the Valles Caldera Trust, P.O.
Box 359, Jemez Springs, NM 87025





